THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No. Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Shares of M.T.N.L.

3993. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited has floated its shares in the market;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether employees of the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited have been offered these shares;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA) : (a) and (b). MTNL shares held by the Govt. were disinvested to the extent of 34.27% in 3 branches.

Month/Year of disinvestment	No. of Shares disinvested	%age
Feb., 1992	120000000	20.00%
March/April, 1994	76935300	12.82%
Oct., 1995	8685660	1.45%
	205620960	34.27%

No fresh issues of shares were made by MTNL.

(c) to (e). No Sir, this was not found feasible in view of the employees of MTNL being on deemed deputation from DOT, Government of India.

[Translation]

Sphatic Reserves in Bihar

3994. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether 'sphatic' (quartz) reserves have been found near Lohardaga in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the traders of Calcutta and Orissa are illegally purchasing the said mineral in large quantities from the villagers; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b). Occurrences of quartz (sphatic) in the hard rock terrain of South Bihar including Lohardaga are geologically possible. However, being a low value mineral, Geological Survey of India has not done any systematic estimation of reserves of quartz in the area.

(c) and (d). Government of India have no information about such illegal purchase of mineral from the villagers. This being a State subject, the State Government of Bihar have directed the District administration at Lohardaga to keep vigil and take appropriate legal action wherever such illegal activities are noticed.

Child Labour in Aligarh

3995. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of child labourers are working in lock industry of Aligarh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of child labourers employed therein and details of their age-group, average working hours and monthly income; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for their welfare?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c). According to Sample Survey conducted by Uttar Pradesh Development System Corporation Limited (U.P. DESCO), around 15,000 children are working in the lock industry in Aligarh. These children work on an average for 8-10 hours a day and their average monthly income is Rs. 254.15 per person. According to this sample survey, 70.70 per cent of these working children are in the age-group of 11 to 14.

(d) A National Child Labour Project was started in 1987 with a view to rehabilitating children withdrawn from hazardous occupations including lock industry in Aligarh and putting them in special schools where they are provided with non-formal education, vocational training, nutrition, health check and stipend. So far under the Aligarh Child Labour Project 30 special schools have been sanctioned to rehabilitate 2500 children. Funds have also been sanctioned for conducting surveys and awareness generation against the evils of child labour.

[English]

Discontinuation of Bogies in Punjab Mail

3996. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in the Punjab Mail running from Delhi to Bombay via Bhopal, a first class bogie which was a part of the rake has since been discontinued and replaced by an AC-3 tier coach;

(b) if so, the reservation quota of berth reservation allotted to Bhopal prior to this change:

(c) the present berth reservation quota of Bhopal for journey to Bombay and to New Delhi;

(d) whether the berth reservation quota of Bhopal has been reduced or discontinued; and

(e) if so, the time by which it will be revived or even raised to a higher number?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A reservation quota of 12 berths by 1038 Punjab Mail for Bombay and 2 berths by 1037 Punjab Mail for Ferozpur was available.

(c) to (e). Instructions have been issued to restore the quota of 12 berths earlier available at Bhopal in first class by 1038 Punjab Mail in AC-3 tier class. A reservation quota of 4 berths in AC 3-tier has already beeh allotted to Bhopal by 1037 Punjab Mail w.e.f. 6-11-96.

Import Amount of Railways

3997. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the value of imports of rolling stock and other equipments including track renewal materials made during the Seventh Five Year Plan period and during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 upto October 31, 1996;

(b) whether the Government have imported huge quantity of British Rail ignoring the product of SAIL:

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether cracks have been exposed in the British Rail which have been laid in the track in few places endangering the security; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by the Govetnment in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (e). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Restructuring of Railways

3998. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Prakash Tandon Committee has recommended the restructuring of the Railways:

(b) if so, the details thereof: and

(c) the steps taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b). A committee to study organisational structure and management ethos of Indian Railways under the Chairmanship of Shri Prakash Tandan was constituted and the recommendations of the Committee were made in March, 1994. The recommendations of the Committee cover the areas of modern financial information systems, developing of business centered approach with focus on the customer, improving the investment planning system, human resource development and organisational restructuring.

(c) The Committee's report conceptual in nature suggested setting up of various committee/task forces to consider the implementability of various recommendations. Keeping in view this suggestion, Ministry of railways have set up various committees/ task forces as under :

(I) *Identify Cost and Profit Centres*

(II) *Modernising Financial Management Information System*

Hasan Iqbal Committee set up on 30.8.94 for identification of cost and profit centres, development of accounting system and modernisation of financial management information system on Indian Railways, has submitted its Final Report on 15.4.96. Board has decided that the recommendations will be implemented on Western Railway as a Pilot Project.

(III) *Capital Restructuring*

A.V. Poulose Committee set up on 2.5.94 for fresh indepth review of the separation of railway finances to fulfil the original objective and review of capital structure on the Railways, has submitted its Final Report on 30.4.96. The salient feature of the Report include :

(i) A charter for Indian Railways which should specifically deal with the policy aspects on role of the Railways, its financial objectives, investment policy, pricing principles, delegation of powers and autonomy and parliamentary control.

(ii) There can not be total withdrawal of investment support, which will have to continue for undertaking projects required under national policy not yielding immediate returns. This capital should be dividend free.

(iii) Balances under the Railway Depreciation Reserve Fund should be solely for renewal and replacement of assets and the Fund should be entirely at the disposal of the Railways without being subjected to plan ceiling or the control of Ministry of Finance.

(iv) Metropolitan Transport Projects should be in the List (II) of the seventh Schedule (Concurrent List) of the Constitution of India to make it clear that state Govt. are also responsible for this type traffic.